



## WHAT IS THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION REVIEW?

SEP 15 1995

During the past two years, Hamilton-Wentworth Region has been conducting a strategic transportation planning study for the Region, referred to as the Regional Transportation Review. This Study is an extension of "Vision 2020", a process initiated several years ago by the Regional Chairman's Task Force on Sustainable Development. In 1994, Regional Council approved a new Official Plan for the Region, "Towards a Sustainable Region", which is intended to guide change and growth in the Region over the next 25 years. The Regional Transportation Review has been prepared to determine the changes to the Transportation System necessary to support the future vision of Hamilton-Wentworth, as outlined in Vision 2020 and the Region's Official Plan.

## CURRENT STATUS OF REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION REVIEW

The technical investigations required to support the Review have been completed. A draft report outlining the findings and Study recommendations has been prepared.

On June 15, 1995, the Study team presented the draft report to the Regional Transportation Services Committee. The Committee resolved:

- a) *That Regional Council endorse the draft report on the Regional Transportation Review as a basis for discussion with the public and special interest groups.*
- b) *That the Commissioner of Transportation / Environmental Services be directed to undertake appropriate consultation activities with the public and special interest groups and report back to Transportation Services Committee.*

## GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

The consultation activities are now underway and will continue over the next few months. Based on the input received, the Study Report and recommendations will be reviewed and finalized for presentation to the Transportation Services Committee in late fall of 1995.

## STUDY FINDINGS

### Growth Forecast:

- Population of the Region is expected to increase from 451,000 persons in 1991 to 498,000 persons in 2001 and to 566,000 persons by 2021.
- Major population growth areas will be Stoney Creek Mountain, Hamilton South Mountain, Ancaster, and Flamborough (Waterdown).
- Most of the Region's employment opportunities (about 70%) will continue to be located below the Niagara Escarpment (eg. Downtown area, Bayfront area).
- Population growth is primarily in areas with limited public transit service and incomplete road networks.
- Land use patterns will encourage increased travel across the Escarpment.

### Travel Demand Forecasts:

- A range of traffic volume forecasts were prepared for morning peak hour conditions. These forecasts were used to assess future transportation needs. Two main scenarios were considered as follows:
  - Trends scenario based on existing transit use and increased travel to and from other Regions.



- Vision 2020 scenario based on doubling transit use by 2021 and maintaining current level of travel to and from other Regions.
- Summary of forecasts for morning peak hour is as follows:

	Year 1991	Year 2001	Year 2021
<b>Auto Trips</b>			
- Trends	62,000	76,000	105,000
- Vision 2020		72,000	79,000
<b>Transit Trips</b>			
- Trends	7,200	7,800	8,300
- Vision 2020		8,000	16,000

### IMPLICATIONS OF TRENDS SCENARIO:

- Under current trends, automobile travel in the Region will increase by almost 70% by year 2021, a much higher rate of growth than the general population.
- Continued low density suburban sprawl will commit the Region's residents to increased dependency on the automobile for personal mobility.
- Long term increases in automobile use will become extremely difficult to reverse -- we will have a "built-in dependency".
- The costs of new roads to accommodate major increases in automobile traffic are not affordable. Further, these new facilities would involve major disruption to the natural environment and to existing development.
- The impact of additional traffic volumes on air quality and the community environment is in direct contradiction to the Region's goals in Vision 2020.
- In summary, the current trends are not sustainable.

### OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED PLAN

The new facilities and services recommended in the Regional Transportation Review include:

- Completion of the Red Hill Creek Expressway connecting Highway 403 to QEW.
- Provision of an initial stage of the Hamilton Perimeter Road west to Bay / Queen Streets, from Burlington Street.
- Improvements to existing regional roads to improve bypass routes around downtown Hamilton.
- Operational and minor geometric improvements to existing roadways crossing the central escarpment to provide improved transit access to downtown Hamilton and to maintain reasonable traffic capacity.
- Expansion of the arterial roadway network to provide urban standard roads to planned new development.
- Development of express bus services between the east mountain and downtown Hamilton, between the west mountain and downtown Hamilton, and improvements to the existing Beeline service between Eastgate, downtown Hamilton, and McMaster.
- Improvements to public transit services through transit priority measures in the central area, new passenger terminals at key locations and expanded service in developing areas.
- Development of a full regional bikeway system to accommodate both recreational and commuter cyclists with designated routes between McMaster and downtown Hamilton and between the central mountain and downtown Hamilton.
- Improved pedestrian facilities, particularly in downtown Hamilton.



The changes to facilities and services would be implemented incrementally over the 25 year planning period in a coordinated program, consistent with the Region's financial capability.

For these changes to be effective in supporting the objectives of sustainable development, the Region and Area Municipalities would also need to implement specific policy measures, including:

- Planning of new land use development to minimize suburban sprawl and "leapfrogging" of subdivisions, to make greater provision for pedestrians and to accommodate planned transit services.
- Parking policies which ensure an adequate supply of parking to meet business and commercial interests while minimizing excessive cheap commuter parking, particularly in downtown Hamilton.
- Better utilization of road rights-of-way to accommodate the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit as well as private automobile needs.
- Implementation of traffic calming projects where through traffic is creating problems on local streets.

### **STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Regional Transportation Review has developed specific recommendations towards the adoption and implementation of the Plan. These recommendations are as follows:

- That Regional Council endorse the Roadway, Public Transit, Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Parking Plans and policy directions outlined in the Regional Transportation Review.
- That a downtown core area strategy be adopted which incorporates:
  - i) Diverting through vehicular and truck traffic to alternate bypass routes, around the core area.
  - ii) Greater priority for pedestrian, public transit, and bicycles on downtown roadway rights-of-way.
  - iii) Parking policies which favour short-term business-oriented parking over all-day commuter-oriented parking.
- That the following strategy be adopted for Regional roadways crossing the Central Escarpment:
  - i) The Claremont Access be maintained as a Regional Road and the major vehicular route with long term improvements to Upper James Street between Inverness Avenue and Fennell Avenue.
  - ii) Beckett Drive, Sherman Access, and Kenilworth Access be maintained as Regional Roads with minor geometric and operational improvements where appropriate to enhance vehicular capacity.
  - iii) James Mountain Road be maintained as a Regional Road with a basic two lane cross-section for vehicular traffic and two-way transit operations at all times.
  - iv) The Jolley Cut be maintained as a Regional Road with future provision for an express bus corridor and a bicycle route.
- That an initial stage of the Hamilton Perimeter Road as far west as Bay / Queen Street be implemented in the short to medium term to provide a bypass route around the north-west quadrant of the central area and that subsequent stages of the Hamilton Perimeter Road be further assessed in the longer term in consideration of future development needs and funding availability.
- That the Region and McMaster University jointly develop a detailed transportation strategy for improved access to the campus.
- That a new roadway crossing of the Niagara Escarpment in the vicinity of Fruitland Road not be included in the Region's Transportation Plan.
- That Neighbourhood Traffic Calming Projects be undertaken in cooperation with residents and local governments for those neighbourhoods where



through traffic on local streets is causing significant problems.

- That the Region and the Area Municipalities develop an acceptable plan to establish a single jurisdiction for Regional transit service levels and to provide more uniform financial support for Regional transit across the urban area of the Region.
- That the Region, in consultation with the Area Municipalities and the Provincial Ministry of Transportation, finalize a plan for significantly rationalizing the current Regional Road Network and the staged implementation of these changes.
- That the Region ensure leadership by example by establishing a Travel Demand Reduction Program for Municipal Employees.
- That the Regional Planning Department review the Transportation Plan to identify areas where changes should be made to other official documents.
- That the Region continues to implement the Regional Bicycle Master Plan (as amended to be compatible with the road and transit strategies) with provisions for safe access to the Central Area across Highway 403 and across the Central Escarpment as a priority.
- That Regional Council work with the Area Municipalities to develop and implement effective parking policies and programs that seek to encourage the short term business and shopping parking and discourage the all-day employee parking.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS**

The Regional Transportation Plan provides a comprehensive approach to changing the transportation system and our own travel habits in order to support long-term goals for sustainable development. The Plan will ultimately impact all members of the community and it is essential that it is well understood and has the support of the citizens of

the Region. Consultation on the implementation of specific aspects of the Plan will be ongoing. However, at this time it is important that special interest groups and the general public have opportunities to participate in finalizing the plan and ensuring that it reflects the principles of Sustainable Development. Specific opportunities include:

- Meetings with a wide variety of public interest groups who have been involved throughout the process.
- Additional meetings with groups will be held as requested.
- Study reports are available. Summary reports will be mailed on request and technical reports are available for review at Regional offices.
- A general public meeting is scheduled for the afternoon and evening of October 2, 1995 at the Y.W.C.A. Auditorium at McNab and Hunter Streets in downtown Hamilton. Display material, reports and project staff will be available from 1:30 onwards and members of the public may make short presentations to the Study team after 7:00 p.m. Persons wishing to make presentations should contact the persons noted below or register at the meeting, before the presentations commence.

## **WHERE CAN I OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION?**

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